

# **DODGE COUNTY LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT 2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Mission Statement**

Working together to provide education, information and technical assistance to residents and units of government in Dodge County to protect, restore and sustain our soil and water resources.

**2019 LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

Larry Bischoff.....Chair  
Allen Behl.....Vice-Chair  
Lisa Derr.....Secretary  
Dale Macheel.....Committee Member  
William Muche.....Committee Member  
Bill Foley.....Lake District Representative  
James Qualmann.....FSA Representative



L to R: Bill Foley, Dale Macheel, Allen Behl, Lisa Derr, Larry Bischoff, William Muche, and James Qualmann.

## **2019 LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT STAFF**

John Bohonek.....County Conservationist  
Dave Braunschweig.....Watershed Technician  
Jon Duckert.....Farmland Preservation Technician  
Robert Bird.....Conservation Agronomist  
Jared Winter.....Conservation Technician  
Becky Justmann.....Administrative Secretary



From L to R. John Bohonek, Becky Justmann, Jared Winter, Jon Duckert, Robert Bird, and Dave Braunschweig

## FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The Farmland Preservation Program offers property owners a tax credit who have land that is zoned A1 and meets state performance standards. Depending on the type of zoning in your township, they may be eligible for a tax credit of \$5.00/acre, \$7.50/acre or \$10.00/acre. In 2019 we managed 607 Certificates of Compliance covering 114,371 acres. This is an increase of 398 acres from 2018. We completed 156 status reviews monitoring compliance with NR151 performance standards.



CZ -- County Zoning | TZ -- Town Zoning



## **LAND AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

In 2019, \$37,953.28 of cost share money was available to Dodge County residents. \$15,152.46 was committed to projects that could not be completed due to the weather. This money will be carried into 2020. \$22,800.82 was used for the following practices.

- 30 Wells were abandoned, 3 with cost sharing
- Grassed Waterway
- 2,160 Feet Critical Area Seeding
- 5 Manure Storage Closure on two sites
- 211.3 acres Nutrient Management Plans written

### **Critical Area Seeding**



### **Manure Storage Closure**



### **Grassed Waterway**



Contracts for the remainder of the cost share money was signed for 2 grassed waterways and 1 diversion. These projects will be constructed tin 2019 due to wet conditions in 2018.

### **ANIMAL WASTE ORDINANCE**

Three permits were issued under the Dodge County Manure Storage Ordinance. One of the plans was designed in our office. Two plans were designed by private engineers and reviewed to ensure they met the Ordinance requirements

## **WILDLIFE CROP DAMAGE ABATEMENT AND CLAIMS PROGRAM**

Dodge County had 3 claims for Wildlife damage in 2019. The crop damage was assessed at a value of \$7,563.58. Wildlife crop damage payments were processed to 3 producers for a total of \$6,063.58. 19 deer were donated under the Venison Donation Program, resulting in 465 pounds of venison being donated to our local food pantries.

## **NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

We assisted 38 landowners with revising their Nutrient Management Plans and teaching them how to use SnapPlus so they can prepare their own plans. We documented 180,779 acres of cropland covered by Nutrient Management Plans in Dodge County. This is an increase of 704 acres from 2018.

## **TREE PROGRAM**

We held our 17<sup>th</sup> annual tree sales program. Our trees come from Laura's Lane Nursery in Plainfield, WI and from Chief River Nursery in Grafton, WI. We sold 21,100 trees in 2019 to 193 property owners. This is an increase of 625 trees from 2018.





Our tree planter was rented out to one landowner planting 1300 trees.



### **VOLUNTARY PRIVATE WELL TESTING PROGRAM**

2019 was the 4<sup>th</sup> year of our voluntary private well testing program. As we rotate around the county, we tested 174 wells in Beaver Dam and Burnett townships. We partnered with UW-Extension, UW-Stevens Point, and Dodge County Department of Human Services and Health for testing the water samples and to provide the homeowners information and education on what their test results mean for them.



## Poster Contest

This is the first year we held a poster contest in 18 years. The Theme for the posters was **“Life in the Soil, Dig Deeper”**. We had 144 posters submitted for five age group divisions.

Congratulations to the following students who placed 1st place at the Southern Area contest and moved on to state, Adella Jacobs, Promyse Meagher, Ben Cameron, and Alexia Weber. At state, Adella Jacobs places 3rd, Promyse Meagher took 1st, and moved on to National, Ben Cameron placed 3rd, and Alexia Weber placed 2nd.



Adella Jacobs, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades K-1, Home School



Brayden Marx, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades K-1, St. John's Lutheran School



Lincoln Kahlhamer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Grades K-1, St. John's Lutheran School



Promyse Meagher, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades 2-3, Rock River Intermediate



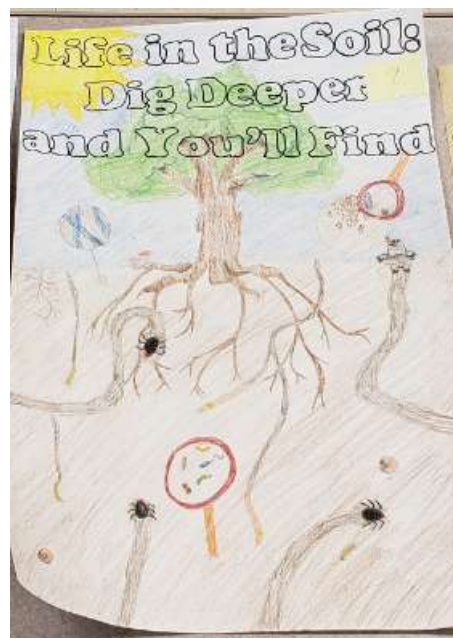
Ayana Avila-Solis, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Grades 2-3, St. Mary School



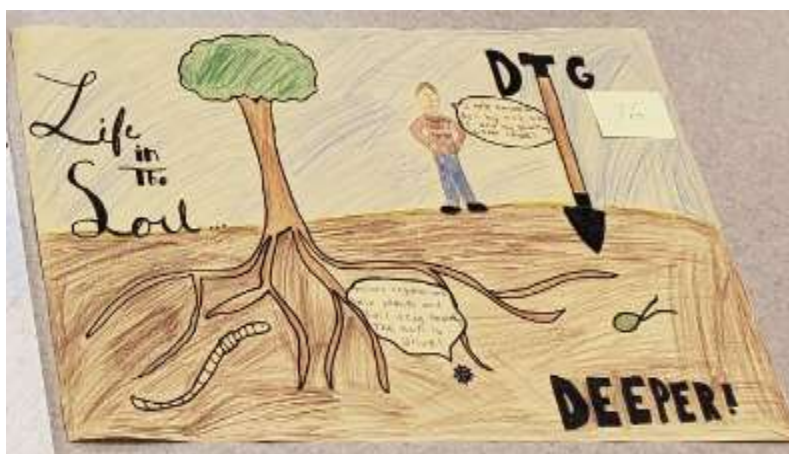
Makayla Koelsch, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Grades 2-3, St. Mary School



Ben Cameron, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades 4-6, Home School

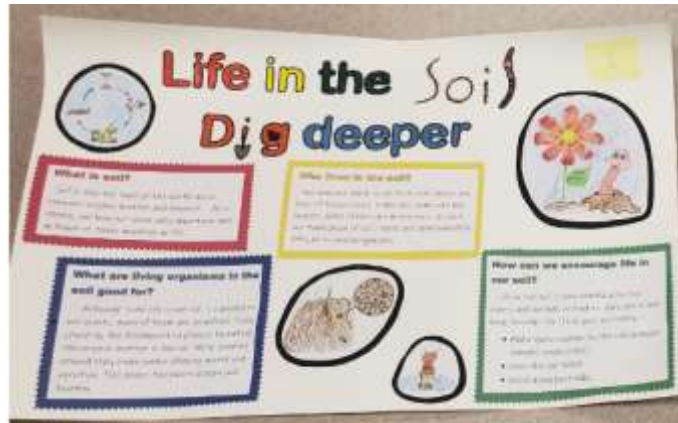


Timothy Cameron, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Grades 4-6, Home School



Hannah Aalsma, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Grades 4-6, SAGES





Bethany Cameron, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades 7-9, Home School

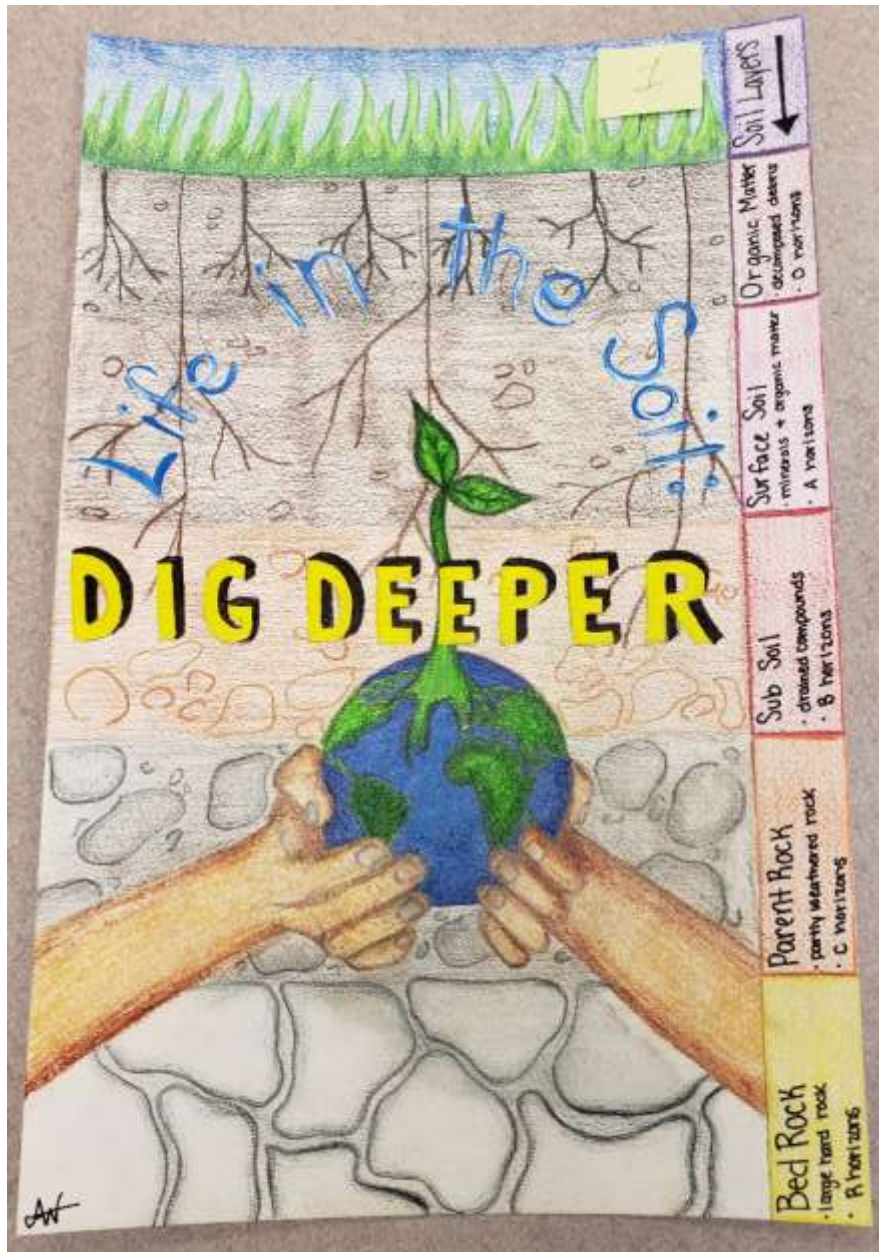


Bodean Schinner, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Grades 7-9, Honor Intermediate School



Rebecca Dietrich, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place  
Grades 7-9, Home Intermediate School





Alexia Weber, 1<sup>st</sup> Place  
Grades 10-12, Lomira High School

## **DODGE COUNTY FARMERS FOR HEALTHY SOIL HEALTHY WATER**

The Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil – Healthy Water is a farmer led group. Their mission statement reads:

**“Improving Our Community’s Soil and Water through Conservation Practices & Education.”**

The farmer group’s major efforts have been in their educational events that focus on the benefits of reduced tillage and cover crops. The group has also started getting involved with Nitrogen Use Efficiency studies through UW- Discovery Farms and have implemented their own incentives program with monetary assistance from three lake groups.

### **February Conference**

A 3-part event was held on February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in Juneau and the town of Westford, respectively. The first day, held at the Juneau Community Center, comprised of a day session held primarily for farmers and an evening session primarily set up for lakefront property owners. The first day saw Steve Groff (a farmer from Holtwood, PA.) to discuss soil health and was followed by a number of local farmers sharing their experiences on their operations. Other topics presented were “Establishing Cover Crop”, “Termination of Cover Crops”, “Nitrogen Management with Cover Crops”, and a Q&A panel. Approximately 135 attended the first day session. The evening session, held at the Bayside Supper Club in Beaver Dam. Steve Groff talked about how we can reduce runoff of sediment and nutrients into our lakes and rivers. Lisa Reas discussed what lake property owners can do to protect against runoff from their lake properties. 75 people attended the evening session. The second day was held at a farm in the town of Westford. There was a Q&A with Steve Groff. Abby Augarten, from UW Discovery Farms talked about Nitrogen Use Efficiency. 76 people attended the final session.

### **Pre-Plant Spring Workshop**

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, a workshop was held on a farm in the town of Leroy to discuss “How to Handle Compaction and Ruts for the Coming Spring”. Francisco Arriaga of UW- Extension/Madison discussed how to reduce compaction during the spring using no-till and cover crops. Local farmers discussed how they handle compaction and ruts from fall harvest. 90 people attended this event.

### **Prevent Plant Workshop**

Due to the wet fall and winter, a Prevent Plant workshop was held on May 28<sup>th</sup>. 42 people attended this event.

### **August Field Day**

On August 7<sup>th</sup>, an event was held at Vanderloop Equipment in Beaver Dam. During the morning session, Doug Sutter and Casey Vanderloop talked about their manure handling systems. Topics discussed in the afternoon session were “Reduce Your Tillage”, “Soils”, and “Wheat and Small Grains”. 82 people attended this event.

### **Combine Cleaning Clinic**

A Combine Cleaning Clinic was held on September 17<sup>th</sup>. This clinic talked about the importance of cleaning weed seeds from your combine to stop/reduce the spreading of invasive weeds. 10 people attended this clinic.

### **Fall Cover Crop Showcase**

This event was held on a field near Fox Lake on October 17<sup>th</sup>. This event discussed Cover Crop Species, Mixes, and their benefits. Methods to reduce phosphorous were also discussed. 40 people attended this event.

### **Nitrogen Use Efficiency**

Four Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) plots were established across the western half of the county to help farmers better understand how they can use N more responsibly. This was done with assistance from UW-Discovery Farms and crop consultant, Phillip Laatsch (Phillip's Crop Care). Research is still being done with plans to expand the program in Dodge County through the Healthy Soil – Healthy Water group.

## **Cover Crop Incentives Programs**

The farmer's group incentive program continued this year to promote the adoption of cover crops across the county. The incentive program increased from 17 participants to 42. Acres planted increased from 1,426 to 2,761 acres. The program provided \$20.00 per acre for up to 30 acres. The operator had to match those acres 1:1 if this was their first time participating. If this was their second time participating, they had to match the acres 2:1.

Fox Lake Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District and Fox Lake Preservation Organization provided cover crop seed for 950 acres around Fox Lake

## **Summary and Future Plans**

The Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil – Healthy Water group plans to continue their schedule for educational events with a couple lake group events to be held in cooperation with the farmers programs. The On-Farm research will be continued primarily by agronomists who work with the group. Goals for expanding both the NUE program and the incentives programs have been set and is such outlined in the Farmers grant received from DATCP for the 2020 year and held by the LWCD.



## **9-Key Element Watershed Plans**

In the spring of 2019, the DNR and EPA approved the Wildcat Creek Watershed plan. This plan is using the 9-Key Element approach and the purpose of the plan is to reduce Phosphorous and Sediment loads in the waterbody. As the name would suggest, there are nine steps to this process. They are summarized below:

1. Identify the causes and sources of areas that need to be controlled to reduce load reductions.
2. Estimate the load reductions needed to meet the plan
3. Describe the management measures (conservation practices) needed to meet the load reductions.
4. Estimate the cost of the conservation practices and technical assistance needed.
5. Develop an Information and Education strategy.
6. Create a schedule for implementing the plan.
7. Create a description of measurable milestones.
8. Set criteria that will determine if the goals are being met or if the plan will need to be revised to meet the goals.
9. Create a monitoring component to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation over time.

The Wildcat Creek Watershed is 26,125 acres that are predominantly agricultural lands. In July, we had an introductory meeting with 22 landowners attending.

In the fall of 2019, the DNR and EPA also approved the Lake Sinissippi-Rock River Watershed plan under the 9-Key Element banner. This watershed has 22,540 acres and, like Wildcat creek, is predominantly agricultural.

**Lake Sinissippi  
– Rock River**

**Wildcat Creek**

